

## **Praline Pig Candy**

### **INGREDIENTS**

1 lb. of bacon (Boar's Head is good and readily available)  
1 1/2 C. brown sugar  
1/3 C. maple syrup  
1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper (to taste)  
1/3 C. finely ground pecans  
Optional: 1 Tbsp. bourbon whiskey  
Optional: Breadsticks

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In a bowl, combine all ingredients except the bacon, warm on the stove to dissolve, and put aside. Line a large baking sheet (one that can fit a cooling rack) with aluminum foil and place cooling rack inside sheet. Lay out as many slices of bacon as possible on the rack, very close but without overlapping. Distribute the sugar mixture on top of the bacon slices (if you couldn't fit the entire pound of bacon on the rack, remember to save some mixture for the rest of it!) and place in 375°F oven. Rotate sheet 180° every 10 minutes or so, so the bacon cooks evenly. Flip bacon half way through and rebaste second side. **PUT VENT ON AS THE OVEN WILL PROBABLY GET SMOKEY!** When deep brown and completely caramelized, remove from oven and move pieces from rack to parchment/wax paper immediately, or they will stick to the rack. When cool, move to paper towels and blot off grease. Total baking time should be about 45 minutes. Serve cooled with cheese, fruit and crackers.

OPTION: Another version can be made by wrapping each slice of bacon around a breadstick (thick kind), then coating each stick with the sugar mixture and baking as directed. These make for a nice hand-held appetizer once cooled. The bread sticks may appear soft and pliable when removed from oven but they harden as they cool.

## **Caramelized Pork Rinds**

*by: Jose Andrés*

### **INGREDIENTS**

1/2 C. dark amber pure maple syrup  
1 (5 oz.) package fried pork rinds with skin (chicharrones)  
1/2 teaspoon cayenne (to taste)  
1/4 tsp salt

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Heat syrup (will barely cover bottom of pot) in 4- to 6-quart wide heavy pot over moderate heat until large bubbles cover bottom of pot, about 2 minutes. Gently stir in pork rinds with a wooden spoon until coated, then cook, stirring constantly, until rinds are caramelized and a shade darker, 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat and sprinkle rinds with cayenne and salt, then stir until combined will. Transfer to a large shallow baking pan, spreading out to cool.